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Que. What are some of the positive views on interviews?

Ans. Interview, in the 130 years of its existence, has become an inherent part of journalism. It is a useful means of communication that is, at times, considered to be an art, serving as a source of truth. Denis Brian has stated that in today's world we get to know "our contemporaries" through their interviews.

Que. Why do most celebrity writers despise being interviewed?

Ans. Celebrity writers believe that interviews unduly interfere in their private lives. They regard themselves as victims of interviews. They claim that the interview in some way 'diminishes' them, just like some ancient cultures believed that a portrait of a person takes away his soul. Certain celebrities like V.S Naipaul have claimed that interviews leave them wounded, while others like Rudyard Kipling have referred to it as a crime and an immoral act.

Que. What is the belief in some primitive cultures about being photographed?

Ans. Some primitive cultures believed that getting oneself photographed would rob them of their souls.

Que. What do you understand by the expression "thumbprints on his windpipe"?

Ans. "Thumbprints on his windpipe" means to choke or suffocate somebody by applying pressure on his throat. Saul Bellow uses this expression to refer to the pressure and discomfort felt by a celebrity while giving an interview.

Que. Who, in today's world, is our chief source of information about personalities?

Ans. Interviews help us know our contemporaries and their opinions. They serve as a means of communication between the celebrities and the audience. In this case, the interviewer is endowed with a very special power and he becomes our chief source of information about personalities.

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Que. Do you think Umberto Eco likes being interviewed? Give reasons for your opinion.:

Ans. Yes, Umberto Eco, in all possibilities, likes being interviewed. He readily answers every question asked by Mukund Padmanabhan in an energetic and lively manner. He does not seem apprehensive about sharing his secrets, experiences and opinions with the interviewer, and consequently, the world. There is no indication throughout the interview that he dislikes being interviewed.

Que. How does Eco find the time to write so much?

Ans. During the interview, Mukund Padmanabhan reiterates David Lodge's astonishment on Umberto Eco's large amount of works and how he manages to write them all. Eco replies that just like the universe has empty spaces, our lives too, have a lot of empty spaces or 'interstices', as he calls them. Whenever he has a few moments to spare in between two different tasks, instead of wasting them, he uses the time to write. He even gives an example of his working technique. He says that while waiting for someone to come up the elevator he keeps himself busy.

Que. What was distinctive about Eco's academic writing style?

Ans. Eco's writing style is strikingly different from that of the standard academic mode. The academicians first make a thorough research, then move on to prove their hypotheses, and finally, give their conclusion on that subject. The final outcome, therefore, comes out as tedious. Eco, on the other hand, tells the story of his research, including his "trials and errors". While the scholars usually use a very depersonalised and dull manner, Eco's style is personalised and playful, and in the form of a narrative.

Que. Did Umberto Eco consider himself a novelist first or an academic scholar?

Ans. Umberto Eco considered himself an academic scholar first and then a novelist. He wrote more scholarly articles as compared to novels; and, he attended academic conferences and not meetings of Pen Clubs and writers. According to him, he was a university professor who wrote novels on Sundays. "I started writing novels by accident", he said.

Que. What is the reason for the huge success of the novel, *The Name of the Rose*?

Ans. Umberto Eco has rightly pointed out that the success behind *The Name of the Rose* is a mystery. It is not possible to know the exact reason behind a book's success or failure; one can only make wild guesses. Perhaps the time in history when it was written has proved favourable for its success. According to Mukund, the novel's setting in the medieval past might have contributed to its success. But many novels written about the medieval past have failed to get as much success.